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VALLEY STAR

the independent student newspaper

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Students sound off on shortage of spaces.

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NATIONAL CONDOM DAY
We've got it covered.

SEE VALLEY LIFE PAGE 4

SOFTBALL SHOWDOWN
Valley battles Ventura.

SEE SPORTS PAGE 8

lavalleystar.com | February 23, 2011 | Volume 74 Issue 2

BRIANA FARINA | VALLEY STAR

SWIM FAN - Valley College sophomore Gabriel Fernandez comes up for air while swimming his heart out during Friday's Western State Conference John Joseph Relays Meet held at Valley.

|See **SPORTS**, Page 8|

IMPORTANT

Parking permit requirement is now being enforced. Failure to display a valid permit can result in a $35 citation.

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

Starring Owen Wilson. Directed by Bobby Farrelly. "Hall Pass" opens Feb. 25. Online review coming soon.

ONLINE SLIDESHOW

View action-packed highlights of Valley's men's and women's basketball teams.

These features and more can be found in full @ www.lavalleystar.com

STUDENTS UNKNOWINGLY REVEAL PERSONAL INFORMATION IN PICTURES

Technological advances such as geotagging complicate expectations of privacy.

STEPHANIE COLMAN
NEWS EDITOR

A shot of your boyfriend's "bed head," a "food porn" pic of your lunchtime burger, and later, a quick shot as you head to the gym – all posted to a Facebook or TwitPic account. While shared in good fun, this common practice may be leaving Valley College students vulnerable to criminal activity.

Many popular smart phones and digital cameras now include the ability to geotag images taken by the device. A geotag is a GPS stamp that records technical information about the device, as well as latitude and longitude coordinates. By using a simple, free browser plug-in designed to extract and display the tagged data, anyone can pinpoint the exact location where the photo was taken.

"Is it harmful? Not on face value, I suppose," said Detective Richard Roberts of the Community College Bureau. "But what if a student were to gain an unwanted "friend" who turns stalker? Then what? Traditionally [a stalker] would have to find you, follow you, watch you, determine your pattern of behavior, and then start showing up at places you visit and where you live. If your pictures are geotagged, you have taken this often difficult task away from the stalker and provided him with all the information he needs to start stalking you sooner and more accurately."

According to a 2010 report compiled by Washington, D.C.-based research firm ISL, more than 41 percent of Facebook's then 103 million US-based users were 18- to 24-years-old.

Many students are unaware of geotagging and its potential dangers.

Valley psychology major Kelsey Capodieci had not heard of geotagging. She doesn't post pictures from her phone, but is mindful of overall privacy issues when it comes to sites like Facebook.

"I don't want to give people I don't know random access to me," Capodieci said.

Other students agree about the need for increased awareness.

"Students are definitely not aware," said Valley journalism major Bijan Nasseri, noting that photo posting sites like TwitPic often bury the option for disabling geotagging among the fine print. "I always un-check that option. I don't think most people realize the magnitude … they just want to broadcast what they're doing. We think it's a freedom of speech issue … to be able to post things, but really, it's a privacy issue."

Disabling the geotagging function often requires scrolling through a maze of menu options to find the "location" setting, which can generally be set to "don't allow" or "off." However on many phones,

|See **GEOTAGGING**, Page 2|

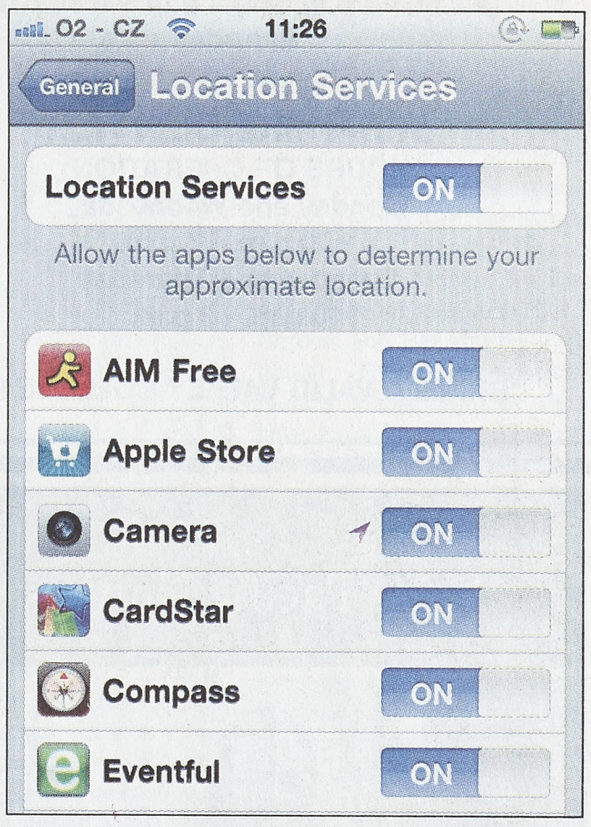

PHOTO COURTESY OF ICANSTALKU.COM

PANEL DISCUSSION EDUCATES VALLEY ON ISSUES IMPORTANT TO STUDENT VETERANS

JENNIFER MORGAN | VALLEY STAR

SOLDIER TO SOLDIER - Veterans Albert Vieane (left) and Ron Cunanan discuss the benefits available to Valley College veterans through the non-profit organization, The Soldiers Project.

Group discussion addresses ways to ease transition from soldier to student.

NATHAN MCMAHON
STAFF WRITER

Military veterans often struggle with readjusting to normal life as they integrate back into the civilian world. In a panel discussion Thursday, new ideas and initiatives were proposed that could help the transition for Valley College student vets.

Panelists included Debra Presser of The Soldiers Project, Alex Letterson of the Employment Development Department (EDD) Workforce Center, and Albert Vieane with CalVets Operation Welcome Home.

Valley is home to more than 900 armed service veterans spanning various conflicts. Approximately 350 of the veterans are students attending school as part of their G.I. Bill Benefits, which cover tuition and provide housing and cost-of-living allowances. These benefits are a great way in which veterans are able to support themselves while gaining an education in preparation for the burgeoning and competitive workforce.

"I've had students reveal that they were veterans, so I wanted to get the information on how to best serve them," said Tiffany Lanoix, an assistant professor in the sociology department who attended the discussion.

Panelists stressed the need for emotional support for veterans.

According to Presser, a licensed clinical therapist with The Soldiers Project, the most important factor in a veteran's re-integration into society is, "a social network and support." Presser spoke of soldiers' battle skills that may not have a place in our society, noting that "sometimes these skills may cause problems when returning home."

Presser also stated that the biggest cause for concern is often the hidden problem of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Veterans returning from combat zones often have a hard time coping with what they may have seen or done, which can create mixed feelings that often result in anxiety and depression. A full two-thirds of combat veterans who are evaluated screen positive for PTSD.

Panelist Alex Letterson of the EDD Veterans Workforce Center educated attendees about the many programs available

|See **PANEL**, Page 2|

THE VALLEY STAR INFO & STAFF

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FACEBOOK APPLICATION AIMS TO MAKE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS LESS STRESSFUL

Admission Splash on Facebook can help students gauge their acceptance into four-year schools.

COURTNEY BASSLER
STAFF WRITER

Applying to colleges and universities when not knowing the chances of being accepted can be stressful. Now, thanks to Admission Splash, there's an app to reduce the worry.

Admission Splash, part of the CampusSplash network, a web-based startup company focusing on several aspects of college life, has partnered with Facebook to recently launch an application designed to help students determine the odds of getting into the colleges they are interested in.

Students start by making a list of the colleges and universities they are considering, selecting from a search-induced drop-down menu that currently includes 1,500 campuses. After that, they add required basic information such as grade point average, standardized test scores, anticipated major, gender, high school, birth date and if they are the first to go to college in their family. There is also optional information that students can fill out, such as participation in sports, employment or volunteer activity, and interest in joining certain clubs on campus, which can help improve results accuracy.

The application then uses an algorithm to determine and rate the chance of admission with five levels of likelihood ranging from "very good" to "very poor."

Valley College philosophy major Holly Wolfstein said she would probably use the application.

"I think the idea definitely has potential," said Wolfstein. "It's also really helpful because I'm not applying yet, but I have colleges in mind so I can look into what I need to improve and how much."

Although the idea of figuring out what to improve on is a great step, Admission Splash itself does not provide specific information on how to improve the odds of being accepted. However, to get an understanding of where students might want to personally improve, they could put in a higher grade point average to see how better grades would affect their chances, or see how deciding to volunteer might improve the odds for admission.

Nursing major Alex Montalbano would probably use the application but not take it to heart.

"I might use it just to see what it says, but I probably wouldn't believe it," said Montalbano. "It uses a formula and doesn't look at the student as a whole. It's just data … input in."

According to a report on Mashable.com, in a sample test of 88 students who were interested in UCLA, about 85 percent of students who used the application to determine their chances of being admitted to the campus were actually admitted.

To access the Admission Splash application, visit www.apps.facebook.com/admissionsplash/.

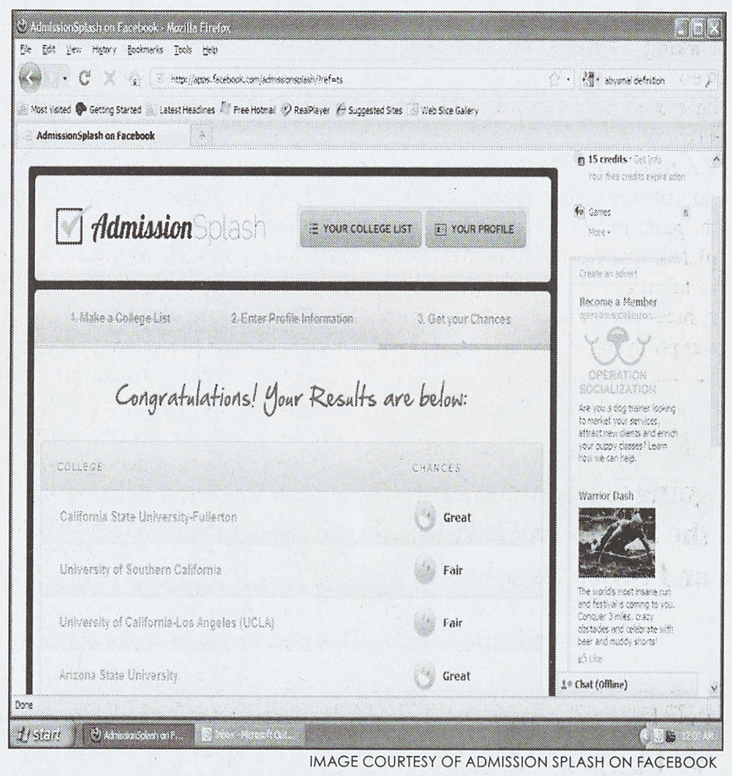

IMAGE COURTESY OF ADMISSION SPLASH ON FACEBOOK

PANEL

Continued from page 1

to teach veterans how to improve their resume writing and interviewing skills.

"We can't hold your hand and guarantee to get you a job, but we can mentor you," Letterson said, encouraging veterans to take full advantage of available services.

Additional ideas to emerge from the discussion came from attending Valley staff members. The need to implement priority class add status for recent veterans as well as including helpful information to direct student veterans to available resources in class syllabi was discussed.

GEOTAGGING

Continued from page 1

this completely disables the GPS functionality, which can affect mapping applications and make it impossible for emergency responders to track a caller's location in the event of an emergency.

"The best way to protect yourself is to understand the technology you're using," explained Roberts. "If you take the time to learn the features of the technology, and think of it as, 'how would this be used against me?' you can take measures to prevent it from hurting you. If you sign up for every new thing that comes along, you run the risk of someone finding a way to make you a victim of that technology."

NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

BARRY JAKOB
STAFF WRITER

Local News:

HOLLYWOOD HILLS —

A LA City firefighter injured in a blaze at a Hollywood Hills home died Friday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. Glenn L. Allen, 61, was a 38-year veteran of the department and was one year away from retirement. The fire injured an additional five firefighters. (LA Times)

CAMP PENDLETON —

Japanese troops from the Western Area Infantry Regiment are assaulting the green hills of Southern California as part of Operation Iron Fist. Approximately 200 Japanese troops will train with Marines for the next month. "Both sides are teaching and learning from each other," said Marine Col. Michael Hudson. (LA Times)

National News:

WASHINGTON, D.C —

The newly sworn Republican House of Representatives passed a proposal on February 19 to trim $1.5 billion in federal funds from California. If a new spending bill isn't passed by March 4, the federal government may be shut down until an agreement between Democrats and Republicans is reached. (LA Times)

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA —

Several hundred men and women marched to the Alabama Statehouse on Saturday afternoon commemorating the 150th anniversary of the inauguration of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. It was the largest event of the year organized by the Sons of Confederate Veterans. (NY Times)

International News:

RABAT, MOROCCO —

Thousands of protestors took to the streets of Morocco Friday to demand the curbing of King Mohammad's power. "This is a peaceful protest to push for constitutional reform, restore dignity and end graft," said Mustapha Muchtati of the Baraka group, one of the organizers behind the protest. (BBC News)

TRIPOLI, LIBYA —

Anti-government rallies have broken out in the Libyan capital for the first time during the rule of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. The sound of gunfire could be heard across the city with reports indicating at least 200 demonstrators being killed by governmental forces. (BBC News)

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

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Saturday
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HOURS OF OPERATION:
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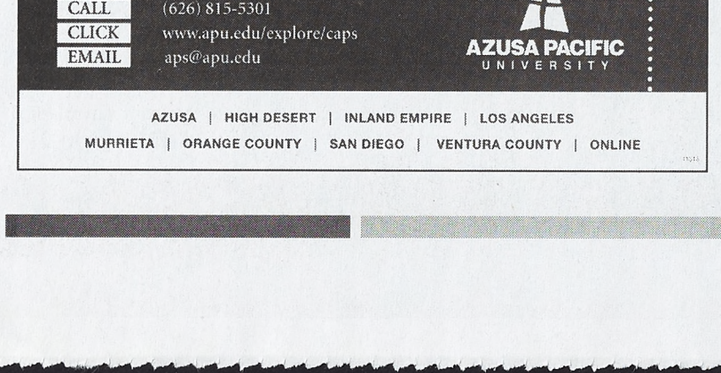

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TIMING IS EVERYTHING

The scheduling of the construction for Parking Lot D could be at a better time for Valley students.

COURTNEY BASSLER
STAFF WRITER

As Valley College students, we know that parking can be a nightmare. What adds insult to injury is that while lots are full, the construction being done on Parking Lot D is exacerbating for everyone.

Valley's Construction and Parking Updates on the campus website state, "Parking Lot D will be closed between January 6-February 6, March 8-June 7 and June 9-August 15, 2011for the construction of new photovoltaic panels in the parking lot. …" and "Once completed, this new photovoltaic panel installation … could potentially reduce the campus's energy consumption by $400,000 annually."

> **"We're seriously going to start parking at the Sherman Oaks mall and bus it to school."**
> -Tracie Viray
> Nursing Major

While it is great that Valley is updating parts of the campus and offsetting costs, it would be nice if the timing of the construction of Parking Lot D could be more suitable for the students. You know, like after the semester.

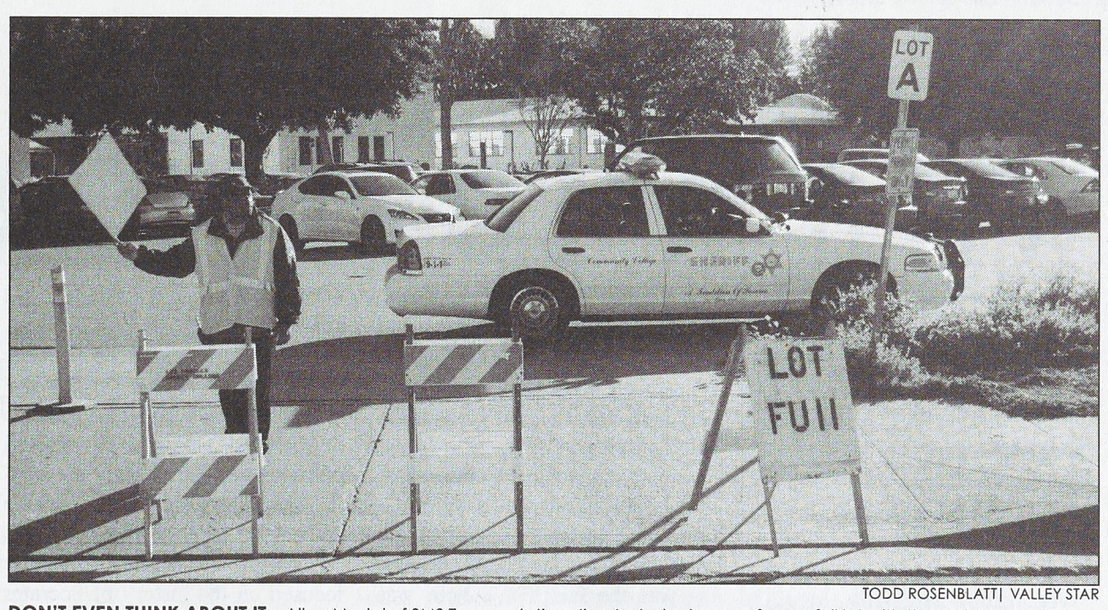
Going green at Valley is great. Truly, it is. But if going green is a topic of consideration, the parking lot should have been open that way students aren't using more gas circling the parking lots to find a decent spot.

Nursing major, Tracie Viray, like many students on campus, isn't too happy with the situation of the construction in Parking Lot D.

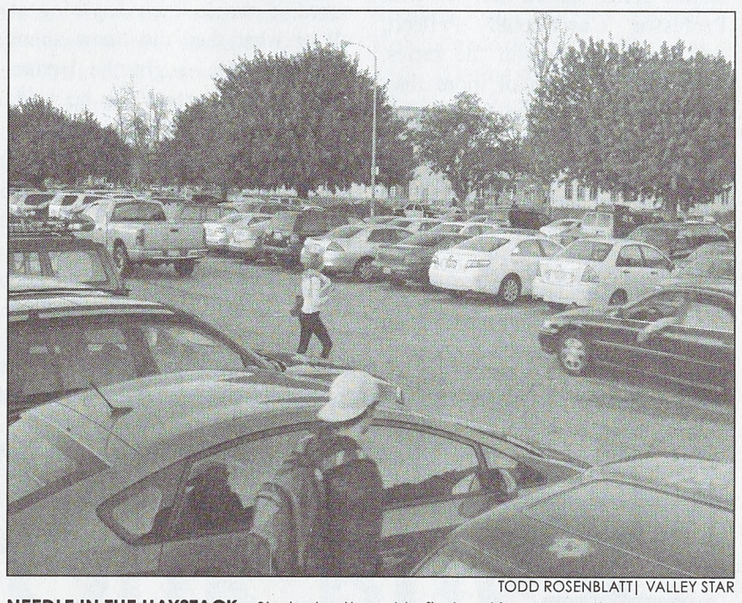
"That's ridiculous," said Viray. "Since it's the beginning of the semester, more [students] are coming from different schools and now we are going to fight even more for parking or wasting our gas driving around looking for parking. We're seriously going to start parking at the Sherman Oaks mall and bus it to school."

At Santa Monica College, in order to park on the main campus it is $85 for the semester and there is also a lot with limited parking for $10 daily. Maybe Valley should take into consideration raising the price for each lot and limiting how many students can get a parking permit for each section of the parking. Surely, if a student knows that they were guaranteed a spot closest to their classes they might shell out more money for the hassle. Plus, that money could provide more workers for the construction of the panels to get the job done faster, or even help with some other financial issues at Valley.

Like it or not, it's just annoying that these panels are taking up precious parking spots, wasting gas, money and just making students frustrated. However, things could be worse. Just ask SMC.



TODD ROSENBLATT| VALLEY STAR
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT - Allan Martel of SMS Transportation directs students away from a full lot with the assistance of the Sheriff's Department.


TODD ROSENBLATT| VALLEY STAR
NEEDLE IN THE HAYSTACK - Students attempt to find parking spaces that are simply not there during the first few weeks of school. as overcrowing has continued to get worsen.

TWO CENTS FROM SPENCE

DARWIN WAS RIGHT

Little Brother is finally old enough to hand out the beat down.

J.P. SPENCE

The idea of the Internet becoming a daily facet in everyone's life appears to be a quaint, dare I say, cute idea. A digital world where one can get electronic mail while getting free sports, breaking news, and porn in a matter of clicks is a modern-day Valhalla. Big businesses thought the Internet was a friend too, an easy way to sell overstocked merchandise at a quicker pace with online exclusives. Everything was going great for big retail business until little brother finally kicked them in the ass.

Blockbuster Inc., the former movie rental giant, announced this week that the company has decided to put itself up for auction after plans for bankruptcy fell through. There are many factors in the scenario, but things have to be going badly when plans for bankruptcy fall through.

This comes on the heels of last week's news that book retailer, Borders Group Inc., is closing one-third of their stores as part of a Chapter 11 filing.

It's just staggering how people are still amazed that big businesses are going under because of the Internet. This is something that has been happening to the print media for years, but obviously most people care more about purchasing the umpteenth billion James Patterson novel used on Amazon instead of being informed on state, national and world news. It's almost like a cry-wolf effect where everyone declares the Internet as a harbinger of financial doom, but are still shocked when it finally happens.

For the record, financial doom should happen. It's inevitable. Not for everyone, but for Borders and Blockbuster in particular. These are antiquated models whose bubbles should have burst long ago. The world we now live in financially is completely different from the one that took Borders and Blockbuster to the their primes. For example, the disposable income that is required for these businesses to thrive is becoming a luxury, exponentially by the day. It was only within the past two years that these two businesses attempted online sales and promotions. By that time they were only an afterthought to a myriad of online companies selling the same product cheaper and more efficiently. Take Netflix for example. You can order unlimited films for a month at a slightly higher price than one Blockbuster rental.

And the same goes for Borders. Unless you're an employee (soon to be a former employee) with a 40 percent discount, the only discount for people who are actually trying to save is online.

The point is this: no one can sanely deny that the Internet is the wave of the future. But honestly, the Internet and new technology are both yesterday's news. That's the problem with the job market today. What few jobs are available require a skill set that people can't afford to learn or are too lazy to acquire. The unemployed and struggling big business, share the same problem and must learn one important piece of information — learn to adapt or get left behind.

E-mail Josh Spence at
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Send general comments to
valleystar@lavalleystar.com

TURNING THIRTY-THREE INTO ONE

The biggest problem confronting our generation is not the economy, but the unwillingness to reform.

BARRY JAKOB
STAFF WRITER

On Feb. 8, college leaders from the CSU and UC systems backed Gov. Jerry Brown's budget proposal to cut $1.5 billion from public higher education. There was virtually no response from the student community except for a handful of protests and petitions. California's education system has seen a $7.5 billion reduction over the past 10 years, yet student responses to the crisis have been muted. Governors and legislators are turning a deaf ear to the voices of students because they lack any credible power as a political force.

One thing history has repeatedly taught is that "united we stand, divided we fall." Labor laws, education and work reform have solely emerged through unionization. Past generations have proved that viable representation comes through the creation of one, unified, organized, central association to represent the voices of all.

There are 33 combined CSU and UC campuses. That's 33 separate voices all trying to be heard whenever budget cuts are being legislated. California's "33 student unions system" is flawed because it creates one government for every campus instead of a single government to represent all students.

Knowing that information, let's apply the lessons of history to the present. Any reform should revolve around transforming California's 33 student unions into one, single, unified, organized, central political force designed to respond to massive budget cut proposals.

Secondly, model a new statewide student government on the UN General Assembly.

Give every college an equal position in a statewide student government that can fight for all students in California.

Budget cuts proposed over the last 10 years have started a faulty trend that has undermined the future of California's youth. Governor Brown's recent proposal is testament to a growing need for students to be represented. The current "33 student union" system was founded at UC Berkeley in 1868. Student communities have grown by 150 percent since then, but still reform has yet to occur.

To stop the madness of the budget cuts, students must reform the way they are represented. Elected officials and public figures won't listen to the needs of young people because California lacks a voice for students to project. Protests and petitions aren't enough.

Unionizing the state's 33 student governments into one statewide organization is the only way politicians will begin to think twice about cutting funds from public education

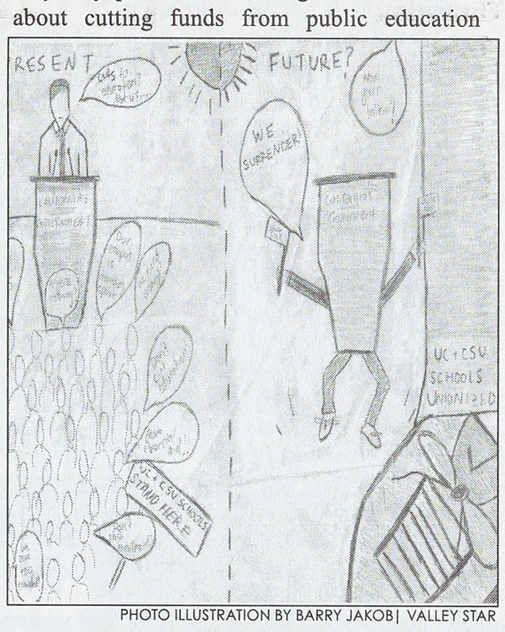
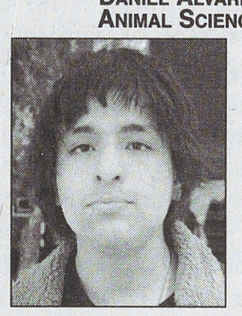
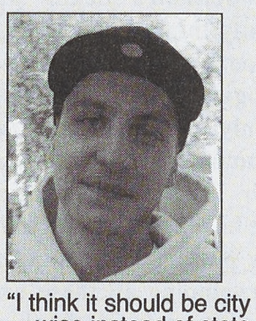


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BARRY JAKOB| VALLEY STAR

VALLEY VIEW | DO YOU THINK STUDENT GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ONE UNIFIED STATEWIDE ENTITY?

"It would be hard to manage so many clubs. If there is one big entity it would be hard to have separate entities."
-Daniel Alvarez
Animal Science


"I guess yeah because when everything is simplified, it's easier."
-Brett Herrera
English


"I think it should be city wise instead of state because it's easier to address more local issues."
-Anthony Christov
Business

"I don't think it's a good idea because it takes away the freedom of schools to do what is right for their own students, because I believe every school is different and has its own needs."
-Nancy Martinez
Communications

EDITOR'S NOTE:

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www.lavalleystar.com.
Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

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THE SLIPPERY SLOPE

As the country's political discourse gets more heated, the last thing we need is our Justices of the Supreme Court taking sides.

NATHAN McMAHON
STAFF WRITER

In a recent article in the Los Angeles Times, Justice Clarence Thomas had "overlooked" disclosing his wife's income for at least five years. From 2003 to 2007, she had earned a purported $686,589. The lack of consequences or public outcry is nothing short of ridiculous and these flagrant violations of ethics need to be addressed.

According to federal law, federal judges are required to disclose spousal income every year in a Supreme Court financial disclosure form. This income came from The Heritage Foundation, which is a right-wing think tank that often has say and influence in the political discussions of our times.

In recent years, the growing political divide has had an adverse effect on our country's political discourse, which in turn has effectively limited our federal government's ability to just get things done. We as citizens, can also apparently look forward to our last supposed bastion of neutral governance, the Supreme Court, as a wing of political opportunism and bastardized capitalism that has the unfettered ability to restrict "we the people" in our everyday lives.

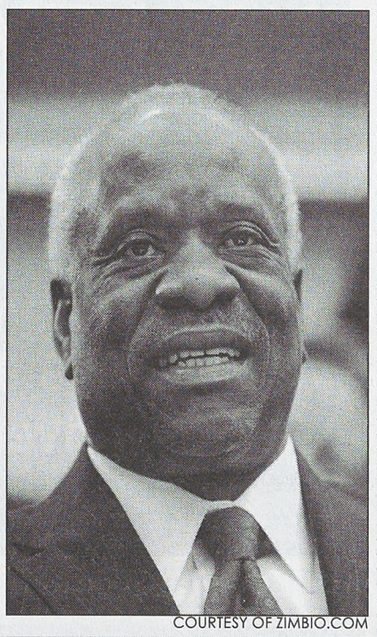
This trend toward absolutism at the hands of unelected officials is nothing new, as politics, money, and the courts have always been incestuously intertwined. Now, it is so flagrantly flaunted that people have just grown accustomed to tuning out the political process and the players involved.

Also of importance is the revelation that Citizen's United spent a whopping $100,000 in 1991 on ads that supported Justice Thomas during his controversial nomination to the Supreme Court.

Justice Thomas' deciding vote in last year's Citizen's United case was an obvious conflict of interest and he should have recused himself from the proceedings.

Also of note is the appearance and speaking engagement of Justice Thomas at a private Koch Industries event. Koch Industries has been the corporate bank roller of the misguided Tea Party movement and has a vested interest in the abolishment of so-called "Obamacare." Here again we can expect that he will not recuse himself from this decision.

Looking at these events as a whole can only lead one to conclude that this Supreme Court is far more politically motivated than it should be. These un-elected officials hold sway over our nation as a whole and to ignore the problems that these inconsistencies in ethics represent is a disservice to us as citizens of this great nation. We must demand that political and financial influence stops at the steps of the Supreme Court and any decisions made are ones that adhere to the Constitution and benefit the people. Without this, we as citizens will be further disenfranchised.


COURTESY OF ZIMBIO.COM

LAVC Events

February 24, March 3, or 10

LAVC to Hold Annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day Starting

The LAVC Career/Transfer Center will offer its annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day starting on Feb. 24 to students who are interested in learning more about careers. This program offers students the opportunity to see what its like to work in an occupation that interests them by spending half a day at a company or organization, and "shadowing" someone in a field they want to learn more about. Interested students are required to attend one of the following five mandatory orientations: Thursday, Feb. 24 at 1 p.m., Thursday, March 3 at 1 p.m. or 5:30 p.m., or Thursday, March 10 at 1 p.m. or 5:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Clive Gordon at (818) 778-5576 or e-mailing gordonca@lavc.edu.

! THINK TRANSFER

FAFSA filing period ends March 2, 2011. Apply online: www.fafsa.ed.gov

Fall 2011
UC Application Updates due online: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/appupdate

February

Thursday, 24
Job Shadow Orientation 1-2 p.m.
Come find out how you can spend a half day shadowing a professional in a Career that interests you!

Woodbury University Rep 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Undecided Major/ Career Workshop 5-6 p.m.
Designed to help students explore Major and career options

Monday, 28
CSUN Rep 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Undecided Major/ Career Workshop 1-2 p.m.
Designed to help students explore major and career options.
How to Transfer Workshop 5:30-6:30 p.m.

All activities in the Career/Transfer Center, Student Services Annex. For Further information visit our web site at www.lavc.edu/transfer or call (818) 9472646.

PHILOSOPHY LECTURE SERIES BEGINS WITH A LOVE FOR LEARNING

Professor Christopher Pallotti lectured a series with his personal choice of Socrates.

COURTNEY BASSLER
STAFF WRITER

Valley College's Philosophy lecture series started Feb. 15 with Professor Christopher Pallotti, the faculty sponsor of the series, addressing a group of more than 15 students about the philosopher Socrates.

The lecture series entitled "The Great Philosophers" is hosted by the Philosophy department with the intention of bringing a community of learners together at Valley.

"What … inspired me to bring this lecture series was my belief in my passion for philosophy," said Pallotti. "One of the things that I think is really important is the love of learning, and I think philosophy … emphasizes the pure love for the activity of learning."

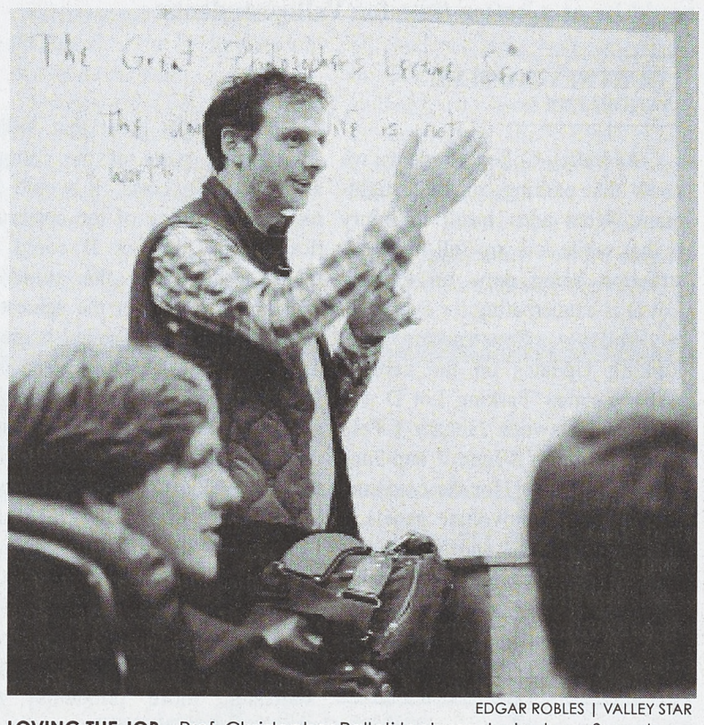
With the topic of philosophy, many can know much information while others know very little; what made this lecture so interesting was the fact that Pallotti was engaging with his audience. He asked if people knew anything at all or what they did know about Socrates. He taught the lecture from "ground zero," as he said, which truly showed that he wanted to make sure everyone got something out of the address.

"It was actually pretty much what I was looking for when I came here," said English major John Henry Evans. "It's information of what I've heard before, but in a completely new way and brought a whole new depth to it, which I appreciated."

While the choice of Socrates seemed like a reasonable one due to its chronological nature as one of the first philosophers, Pallotti picked Socrates because "his writings and ideas are very accessible and easy to relate to," he explained.

Pallotti's lecture mainly focused on the history of Socrates and whom he was, explaining that Socrates liked to observe people and understand their nature. He also spoke about the Socratic Turn, the idea that changed philosophy from a mythological poetry perspective to a more scientific understanding of things.

The next lecture, which is open to the community free of charge, is titled "Ancient Philosophers" presented by Dr. Dievendorf on Tuesday, March 1 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Campus Center 104.



EDGAR ROBLES | VALLEY STAR
LOVING THE JOB - Prof. Christopher Palloti lectures students on Socrates.

NO GLOVE, NO LOVE

Valley College's Student Health Center offers services at little to no cost to help promote sexual health.

CAROLINA LEON
STAFF WRITER

Love is in the air for many students during the month of February and in an effort to spread awareness, instead of disease, National Condom Day was established on the most romantic day of the year, Valentine's Day.

National Condom Day is celebrated annually on campus with an event sponsored by Valley College's Student Health Center, "Love Responsibly." The event scheduled to take place Feb. 16 during Club Day was cancelled due to the rain but many students still received their "raincoats."

Jeri Holden, Valley's health educator, along with the Student Health Center planned "Love Responsibly." As the event approached the only thing that could not be controlled was the weather. Holden was prepared to deliver 125 goodie bags to different classes, in the event of rain. The goodie bags included eight condoms, an informational guide for putting on a condom, candies and resource information for testing.

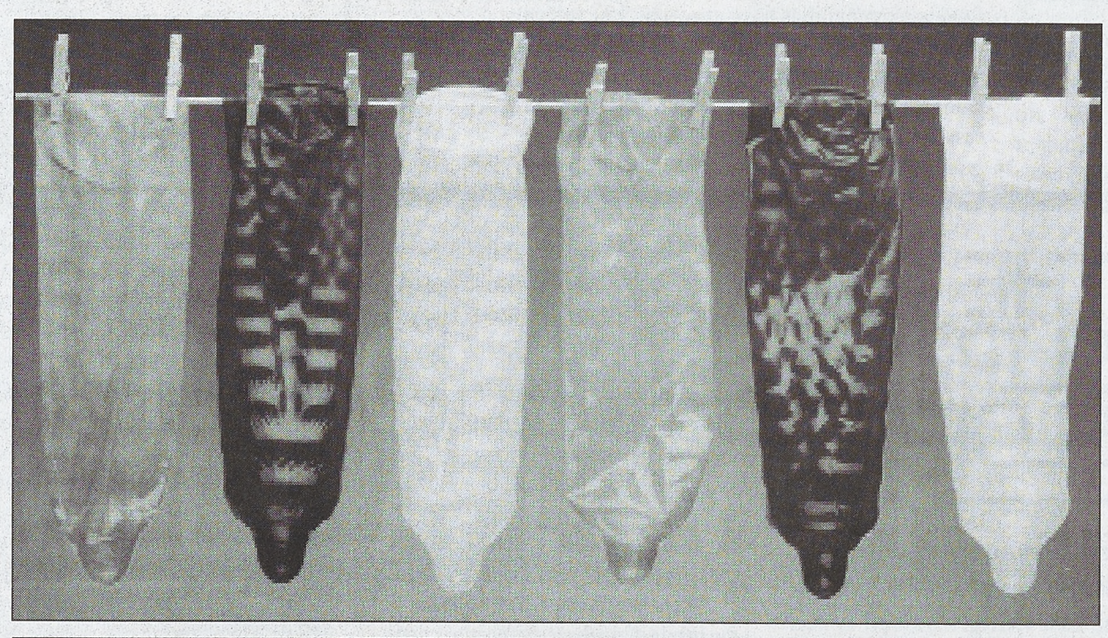
"National Condom Day is an extremely important day to recognize and promote, primarily the prevention of STIs and STDs," said Frances Garcia, athletics professor at Valley whose class was visited. "What a great way to catch the attention of students and possibly save lives!"

Flyers were posted on campus in order to promote the event, but when it was cancelled only one studentapaid a visit to the Student Health Center. She received her gift with what some would say, important valuables.

The Student Health Center is located in the North Gym and is a service open Monday through Friday for students. They provide no-cost services such as physical exams, health assessments, blood pressure checks and psychological services. Other low cost services are offered such as immunizations and lab tests. Free condoms can always be picked up by students of ages 18 and older with an ID.

"National Condom Day was February 14; we wanted to provide goodie bags that included condoms and free STD screening information," said Maria Sandoval, medical assistant at the Student Health Center. "We're here and we'd like to let the students know what services we provide for them."

Students interested in the services available to them by the Student Health Center can contact (818) 947-2918.



SO IT GOES ...

SUPERHERO HYPE

Hollywood digs deep to monotize on forgotten and overused superheroes.

DAVID MOTTE

While Hollywood is anticipating the big "Avengers" movie in 2012, moviegoers can expect to be bombarded with a slew of superhero films over the next two years. Here's a look at all the sequels, prequels, reboots, re-imaginings and a few of the newcomers approaching the big screen.

Joining Iron Man at "The Avengers" roundtable are multiplex rookies Captain America and Thor, two characters that nobody has cared about since the 1950s, which should go over well with today's finicky youth. Being resurrected for a third time in Hollywood's second golden age is the hotheaded green mutant, The Hulk, who will also be joining the Avengers team on screen. The big green shoes previously worn by Eric Bana and, later, Edward Norton, will now be filled by Mark Ruffalo. As exciting as "The Avengers" sounds, having to sit through each individual Avenger's movie before the ensemble film comes out is a little overwhelming.

Also seeing yet another reincarnation in tinsel town is that spandex-loving web-slinger Spider-Man. They can make Spider-Man movies all they want; he'll never get his dignity back. With the comic books, movies, and a Broadway show, Spider-man has become the biggest superhero whore of them all. Sloppy seconds on the red mask go to Andrew Garfield ("The Social Network") in the Marc Webb-directed revamp. The X-Men will also get another shot at trying to impress moviegoers with a prequel focusing on the relationship between Professor X and Magneto.

On the DC side of things, Christopher Nolan's third and final Batman film is perhaps the most anticipated of all the caped crusader films being released in the near future. "The Dark Knight Rises" has only one confirmed villain so far: Tom Hardy ("Inception") as Bane – the chemically enhanced strongman responsible for breaking the original Bruce Wayne's back in the 1993 comics. Anne Hathaway is attached to play Selena Kyle, though the casting announcement did not mention anything about Kyle's alter ego, Catwoman.

The most questionable comic book movie in production, however, is the untitled re-reboot of Superman currently in the hands of director Zack Snyder ("Watchmen"). Though the villain has yet to be announced, the plot should incorporate the death of Superman, featuring Doomsday. Part of the reason for Brian Singer's 2004 "Superman Returns"" lack of success was the villain being Lex Luthor, as it had been in all the previous films. Superman's death was the only thing that could save the comic book series; it seems logical that it would be the only thing that could save the movie.

In retrospect it seems ironic how much effort Hollywood is putting into rebooting and revamping all these used and worn out comic book characters, when the two best comic book movies of 2010 have been about two modern and previously uncharted characters: "Kick-Ass" and "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World." Both of these movies only had to go through one director to be perfect the first time, and both appealed to all generations, not just the World War II Vets who read Captain America in grade school. There's a little food for thought, Hollywood.

E-mail David Motte at *valleylife@lavalleystar.com*
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YOU AGAIN

The low-fi comedy starring Ed Helms and John C. Reilly feels like visiting old friends.

J.P. SPENCE
MANAGING EDITOR

The odd thing about "Cedar Rapids" is that it feels so intensely familiar, even during the first viewing. Take into account that this was done intentionally, unlike most Liam Neeson projects ("Taken Part Two" ... er, "Unknown"). In most cases this would spell instant doom for most films, yet the familiarity only adds warmth to a timeless story of a stranger being in a strange land.

Ed Helms is Tim Lippe, an amazingly naïve small town insurance agent who heads to the major metropolis that is Cedar Rapids, Iowa to attend an insurance convention. Given strict orders to avoid Dean Ziegler (John C. Reilly), Lippe soon befriends the insurance agent and learns to not only have new experiences, but to redefine his parameters of living. Helms is excellent as the gobsmacked agent. First impressions would assume so considering the proximity of this role compared to ones seen in "The Office" and "The Hangover." Even though Helms is one of the best comedic deadpan actors working today, it's the subtle layers of humanity and discovery that he adds to his role that really makes this performance stand apart from his usual one-dimensional characters. Conversely, John C. Reilly relishes the single dimension and manages to wring out as much comedy as possible. Reilly usually does his best work as the foil for the main character and "Cedar Rapids" is no exception.

Phil Johnston may have written the film, but director Miguel Arteta definitely adds his own flavor to the proceedings. Arteta combines the awkwardness of "Chuck & Buck," sexual ambiguity of "The Good Girl" and the intentionally low-fi quality of "Youth In Revolt" into something that is the director's calling card while original in its own right.

"Cedar Rapids" is supported by a fantastic ensemble cast full of people that you don't know, but you know who they are. Stephen Root, Kurtwood Smith, Rob Corddry, Alia Shawkat, and ThomasLennon provide great background for Reilly and Helms to take the spotlight. The actor who invariably steals the show is Isiah Whitlock Jr. Known more for playing corrupt senators, Whitlock's role as straight man adds to some of the biggest laughs in the film.

"Cedar Rapids" isn't going to be a big office draw but it's easily a funnier film than advertised and certainly better than most of the other drivel passing as cinema.

MORE FUN FOR YOUR BUCK

Carcassonne, for the iPhone, brings big board game fun to the small screen.

NATHAN McMAHON
STAFF WRITER

A game with the jumbled up parts of a puzzle, chess, and the strategic nature of Risk may not sound appealing to your average casual gamer. In the case of the classic German board game, Carcassonne, now on the iPhone, those disparate elements add up to just the right amount of fun and game play to make this one of the best apps on the iPhone hands down, period..

Carcassonne may not be as well known or as popular of a tabletop board game as Monopoly, Scrabble, or even chess, but since its introduction in 2000, it has gained a rabid fan base. Its eventual appearance on gaming devices and handhelds was foregone conclusion.

The game, developed by The Coding Monkeys, has the players placing 72 tiles in any pattern on the board. Along the way you have to strategically place your 7 game pieces on the tiles and try to accrue more points than your opponents by the time the last tile is placed.

The tiles themselves have four different types of terrains and come in 19 different configurations. For each turn, the players draw a tile from the stack and then have to attach the tile with the other tiles already placed on the board so that the terrains match up.

The different types of terrain are roads, grass, cities and cloisters. Once the player places the tile they then have the option to attach one of their seven game pieces onto a specific terrain of the tile. Each terrain offers advantages and disadvantages and the placement is key in scoring points immediately and also in the potential of scoring points in the future which can make or break a winning game.

The player pieces each take on a different type of role depending on where they are placed on the tile and this placement also determines points as well as keeping that piece out of commission until the section the player is building is complete. If the piece is placed on the city, they are considered a "knight". The knight can't be removed until the city is completely walled in.

This give and take of player pieces and tile placement is at the heart of intense strategy of the game. Player's may often find themselves having to choose whether they want to place a piece on the board and risk losing it for the rest of the game because they are unable to complete their planned scenario.

When Carcassonne came out for the iPhone in May of 2010, its $4.99 price tag may have seemed a bit steep for a miniaturized and digitized version of a less than well known board game. Since then, its price has jumped to $9.99. That may seem steep at first, but dollar for dollar, and for the amount of fun and playtime you'll get out of it, you're making out like a bandit if you get this amazing little app.

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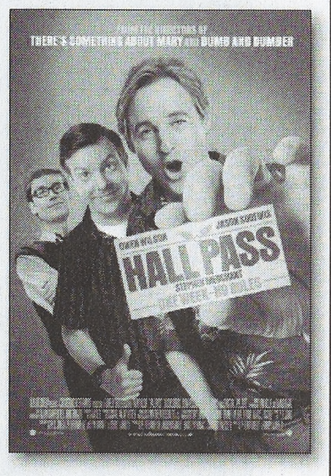
@ THE MOVIES

OPENING THIS WEEKEND



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OWEN WILSON
JASON SUDEIKIS
CHRISTINA APPLEGATE

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- *Gnomeo and Juliet: $19.4m+*
- *Just Go With It: $18.2m+*
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- *Due Date*
- *"Weeds": Season 6*
- *Get Low*
- *All-Star Superman*

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- Bruno Mars - Grenade
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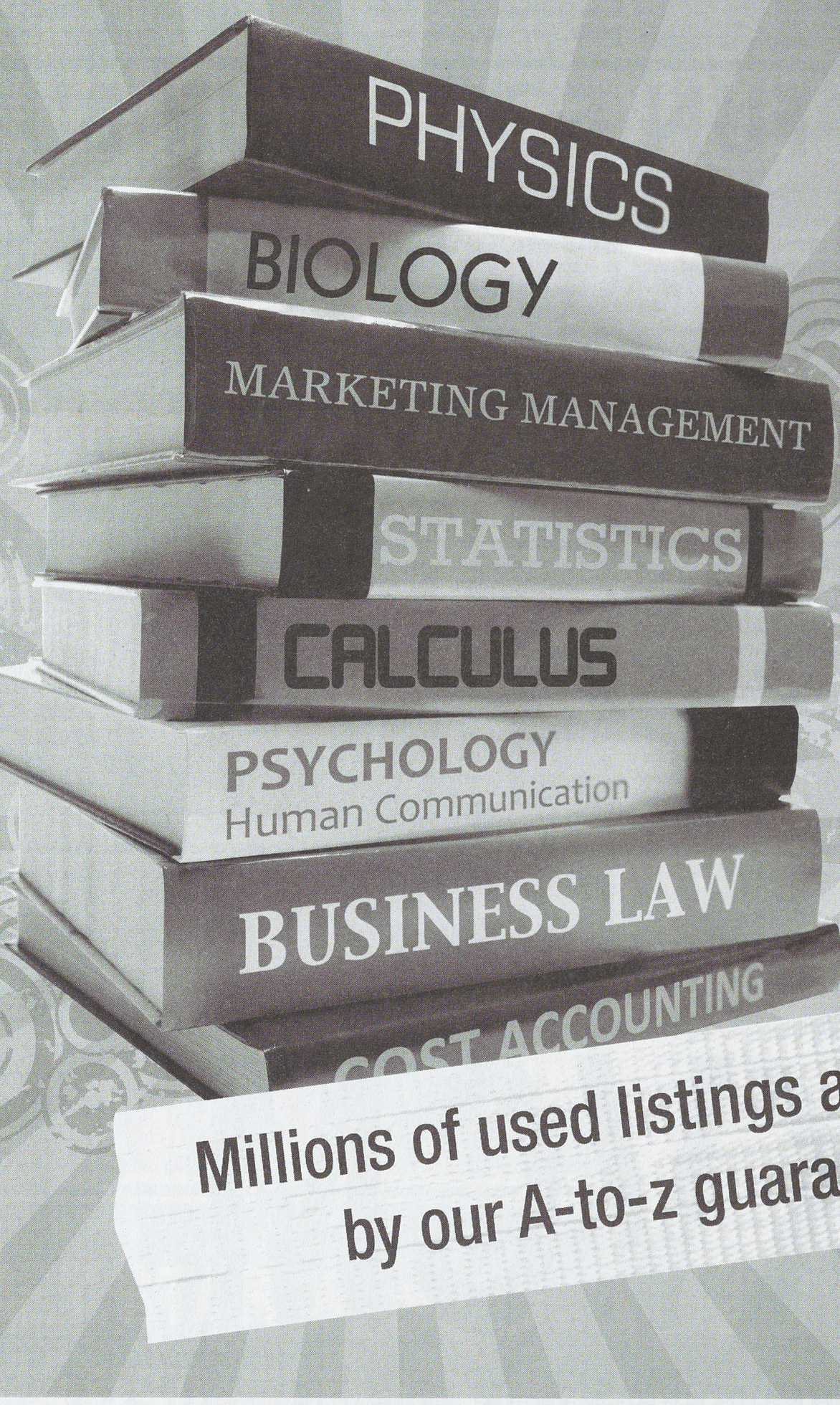

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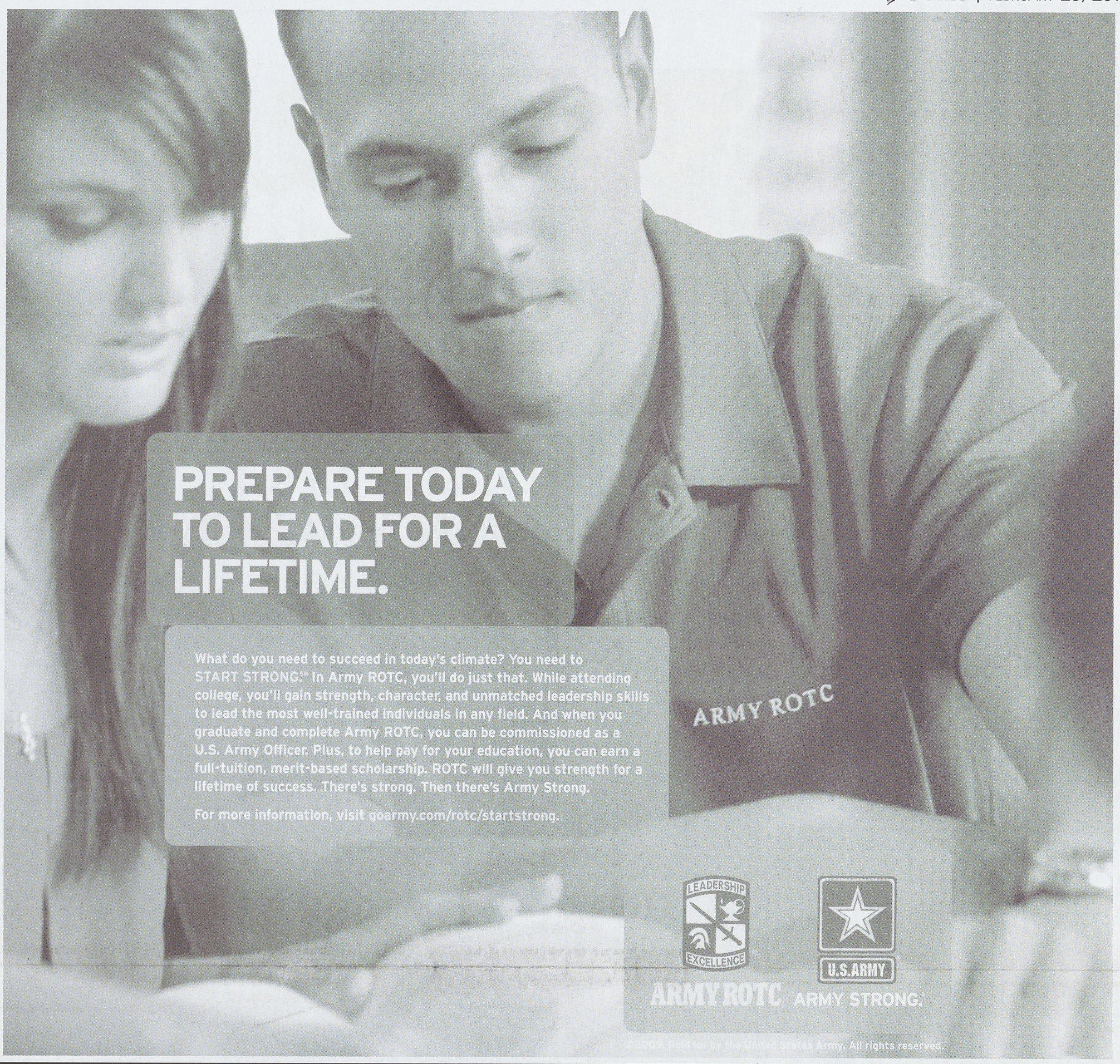
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SANTA MONICA HALTS MONARCH PLAYOFF HOPES

Valley College's women's basketball record for the WSC conference is 8-4, with the loss to Santa Monica on Saturday.

COURTNEY BASSLER
STAFF WRITER

The Lady Monarchs had a lot riding on the game against the Santa Monica Corsairs Saturday night in trying to secure sole possession of second place within the Western State Conference. But the intensity of the Corsair defense halted the Monarchs' momentum and six-game winning streak losing 56-54.

"[Santa Monica] controlled the tempo," said Valley Head Coach Monica Hang. "We missed shots. We fell short on some execution on defense and it's a two-point game, it goes to a lot of things."

Throughout the game Santa Monica pressed the Monarchs and at some points it was broken. Santa Monica ran a 1-2-1-1 press and trapped Valley on several occasions; however, Valley did break through their traps during parts of the game.

Throughout the game, the Corsairs used press defense to rattle the Monarchs' offensive flow. Though the Monarchs were able to break the press at times, the Corsairs successfully trapped the Lady Monarchs and caused several turnovers.

"Our initial plan was to do a different press … because they saw [our press] on film, so we changed the press up … and I thought it worked," said Santa Monica Head Coach Lydia Strong. "The game was tight the whole way … it wasn't a high scoring affair."

Turnovers and missed lay-ups were problematic for the Monarchs. But despite the Corsairs' defensive schemes and the Monarchs' inconsistency on offense, the green and gold only trailed 28-26 at the half.

"We knew that their [press and defense] was coming," said Valley forward Richelle Najera. "It was just not our day. We shot the ball [but] it was just not going in. We played hard. Their baskets were just falling while ours weren't."

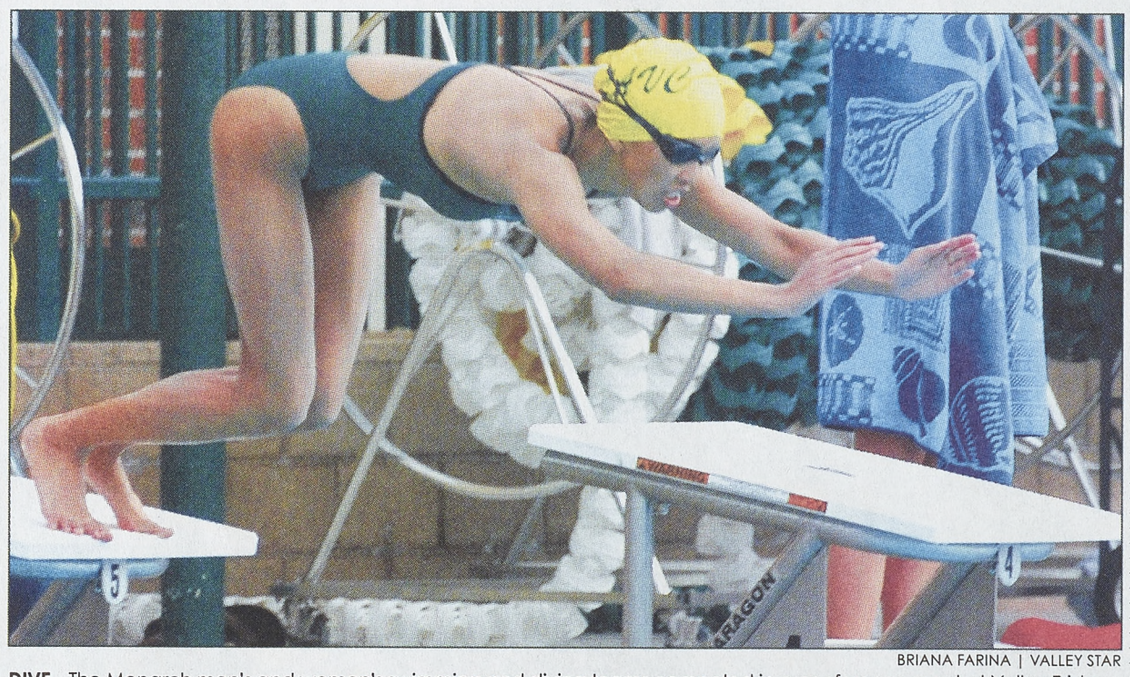
The Santa Monica game also marked the return of starting Monarch point guard Leticia Pelayo, who did not practice with the team during the week, but was cleared to play for the Monarchs' final game of the regular season.

"I was nervous today," said Pelayo. "The whole week they were practicing and I wasn't there because I was in treatment. In reality I was scared, because they had been working … I hadn't done anything."

In the last minute of regulation the score was 56-54, and there was hope that the Monarchs could have tied the game. The Corsairs, however, took the game over with tighter defense and walked away with the victory.

"It wasn't just that last shot, it was little mistakes that that cost us [the win]," Hang said. "Overall, [we] did a good job in the season and the conference. My ladies fought and grew as individuals on and off the court and I'm proud of them."

College of the Canyons will be representing the Western State Conference, Southern Division this Friday, Feb. 25 at College of the Canyons CCCAA Regional playoffs.



BRIANA FARINA | VALLEY STAR

DIVE - The Monarch men's and women's swimming and diving teams competed in a conference meet at Valley Friday.

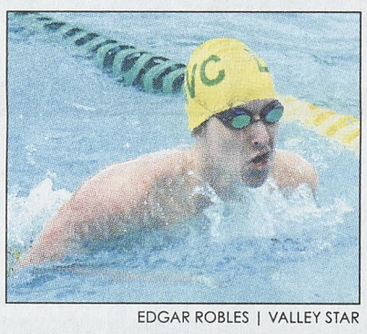
VALLEY DIVES BACK INTO A NEW SEASON

The first meet of the season Valley managed to jump back into the water with no hesitation.

IVAN ZUNIGA
ONLINE MANAGER

Facing 52-degree weather and harsh wind conditions, the Valley College men's and women's swimming and diving teams struggled to stay focused last Friday in the first meet of the season.

The Western State Conference John Joseph relays meet included 20 events, and more than seven colleges attended. The meet was held at Valley and the schools competed in a variety of different heats.



EDGAR ROBLES | VALLEY STAR

"It was fun, besides the cold air and wind, all the other teams were good and it was a fun competition," said Valley swimmer Ian Rotundo.

In the 4x50-yard freestyle relay, which was the first event, the women's team finished eighth with a final time of 2 minutes, 15.66 seconds and the men's team finished second with a time of 1:32.67. The women's team caught up in the sixth event and earned second place in the 4x100 individual medley relay with a final time of 4:50.04.

"My girls swam just fine for their first meet of the season," said Valley women's head coach Mike Santo. "We're not deep enough [for] any duel meets, but I think we'll be fine in the championship meets."

The men's team placed second in three events: the 4x50 (1:32.67), 4x100 free relay (3:35.29), and the 4x50 medley relay (1:48.30). The team also placed third in the 4x100 back relay (4:13.80), 4x200 free relay (7:50.39) and men's 4x100 fly relay (4:08.95).

"I like where we are right now and we're training hard and we're getting better," said men's head coach Jim McMillan. "For this time of the year some kids are a little bit ahead of schedule and some are a little behind and we got to start focusing on them and getting them caught up."

Ventura College, Santa Monica College and Pierce College dominated the relay as they placed first in several events. In the last event, which was the mixed 4x100, 8x50 free relay, Pierce College finished first with a final time of 3:33.18.

"Ventura is always a big team, they always do well and we try our hardest to keep up with them." said Rotundo.

Next up for the swim team is the Mt. SAC Invitational held at Mt. SAC Feb. 25-26.

ANALYZE THIS

HE'S WORTH AN ENTIRE TEAM

Carmelo Anthony is worth his weight in gold.

LUCAS THOMPSON

Despite the moments of glory and hype surrounding Kobe Bryant's MVP performance and Blake Griffin literally jumping over a car while a local choir sang "I believe I can Fly" in the Slam Dunk contest during All Star Weekend (trust me it really happened), all eyes were on Carmelo Anthony.

Speculation on where one of the NBA's most valued scorers would end up began roughly a year ago when Anthony, unhappy with the direction in which the organization was headed, told the media he wanted out. Out he is, and a New York Knick Anthony has become.

The inevitable and highly anticipated deal, that came just three days before the trade deadline, leaves a total of 12 players in new homes in the final stretch of the regular season. According to the Los Angeles Times, New York will send starters Raymond Felton, Wilson Chandler, Danilo Gallinari, and 7-foot rookie Timofey Mozgov to Denver for Anthony, Chauncey Billups and three more players. Minnesota is also involved in the three-team trade.

Though the Knicks could have waited until the summer – when Anthony would have become a free agent – to acquire the NBA superstar, waiting or leaving anything to chance at snagging Anthony would have been pure stupidity on the part of a longtime struggling Knicks organization looking to become relevant again.

Granted, the Knicks traded almost everyone with the exception of Amare Stoudemire to Denver for Anthony and Billups; this will be a defining moment in franchise history.

Of all professional sports, basketball is the one in which you must build your team around one or two great players, in this case Stoudemire and Anthony. Great players make average players good, and the last time average won a championship in the NBA was never. Take Cleveland for example, they went from the playoffs to being possibly the worst team in the league all in one season … maybe LeBron James leaving had something to do with that.

The Knicks have barely been a team worth mentioning since 1973, but hey all you critics who think this is one big "soap opera," and a "blockbuster of a bad idea," maybe New York should have just waited until all the other teams in the league become average.

It's bad business to move around 12 players for one you say? Within hours of the decision from the Knicks, ticket prices rose 600% for Wednesday's game against the Milwaukee Bucks, according to the New York Daily News. That means the worst seats in the house are selling for around $170, and that is no where near the price Spike Lee will be paying.

The bottom line is it's money, it's direction and it's an instantaneous way for the Knicks to finally become contenders in an East full of teams that have been built on talent. So buckle up, Heat and Celts fans, the Knicks will be going deep into the playoffs.

Email Lucas Thompson at editor@lavalleystar.com

MONARCHS LOSE TO HEIGHT

The men's basketball team lost 89-74 against the newly crowned conference champion Corsairs.

JOSHUA LAWRENCE
STAFF WRITER

With nothing to lose in the last game of the season Saturday night, the Valley College Monarchs walked onto the court in hopes of beating the Santa Monica Corsairs. However, the team ran out of gas early and lost by 15 points, 89-74. The defeat crowned the Corsairs conference champions.

With 12 minutes left in the first half, the Monarchs were tied with the Corsairs at 15. However, the Corsairs pulled themselves together and went on a 12-0 run in the following two minutes of play. James Shipp, a Monarch sophomore guard, was able to put a stop to the 12-0 run with an easy drive down the lane that ended in a lay-up. Shipp had a double-double in the game with 11 points and a team high of 11 rebounds.

"We came out hard," said Shipp. "We knew how to beat them but just seemed to fall apart. The last game of the season is always tough."

SCOTT MITCHELL| SPECIAL TO THE STAR

THE END OF A LONG SEASON - Coach Virgil Watson giving direction to his team for the last time this season.

Five minutes before halftime the Monarchs tried to keep the game within reach, but still trailed the Corsairs 37-30. Leading the Monarchs was shooting guard Marcus Johnson, who had eight points at the half, along with forward Alex Smith. Smith had four points, two blocks, and two rebounds. When time ran out in the half, the Corsairs had extended the lead to nine, 42-33.

Valley came out looking to get their first lead after the half with a three-pointer from Johnson. Smith added another two points and brought the deficit to four points; however, the Corsairs wouldn't let up, and quickly added five points of their own. Halfway into the second half, the Monarchs were down 69-58 despite Smith adding 10 more points to his total of 19 for the game.

"We just didn't have a defense," Smith said. "We tried to get through double teams that ended up causing us to turn the ball over."

The Corsairs extended the lead to 14, 81-67, with five minutes remaining in the game with points from shooting guard Everett Brown and forward Matt Sinclair. As the final seconds ticked off the clock, the Corsairs matched points with the Monarchs and closed out the game 89-74.

"We were given opportunities to win, we just didn't take advantage of them," said Monarch Head Coach Virgil Watson. "We need more size to win games. We tried to do a lot without being able to compete physically with our opponents."

Watson looks forward to individual meetings with his players and discussing expectations for next season. The Monarchs finished their season 9-17 and 2-10 in conference play.

TODD ROSENBLATT | VALLEY STAR

SLIDE - Freshman infielder JenaRae Serranzana keeps her foot on the bag while her opponent slides into third safely.

DEJA VU ON THE DIAMOND

The softball team enters a new season with deja vu.

CRISTINA SERRATO
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Busy kicking butt and taking names, Valley College is offering no mercy in their quest to make it to the top. And after a 6-5 win against Ventura College Tuesday, the Monarchs have proved to be a formidable opponent.

"We won," beamed Head Coach Frankie Garcia. "We're ready for conference and it starts [in two weeks]."

Ushering in the new softball season with a 7-2 win against El Camino Community College, the 2011 season looked hopeful early on for the Monarchs. However, the season-opening win was quickly overshadowed by four back-to-back losses, and the Monarchs scrambled to regain their footing.

"I always say it and will say it again ... we will get better and we will try harder and continue improving," said Garcia.

Last season ended with 21 wins, 18 losses and no playoff berth for the Monarchs despite all their hard work and dedication. The Monarchs were so dedicated to improving that they could be found practicing on the field long after the disappointing season ended.

"This is a team of new young freshmen that seem dedicated," said Athletic Director Diedra Stark. "They did a lot of hard practice hours during the off season."

The last several games have the scales for the Monarchs who remained hopeful despite the barrage of losses early in the season. Several games later the Monarchs have six wins and five losses, and they have shaken any sense of deja vu anyone might have had.

"They are off to a good start," said Stark.